

news Briefs



String Cheese Incident at Horning's Hideout

FIGHTING FOR THE HIDEOUT

Some of the Northwest's biggest concert promoters are desperately scrambling to rebook huge shows. A small business owner is bracing for a slew of potential lawsuits. And Washington County's three commissioners are sticking to the hardline in their refusal to hear a Measure 37 claim early — the one solution that could keep Horning's Hideout, a popular outdoor concert venue south of Portland, open for the rest of the summer.

On July 6, a Washington County land-use hearings officers released a 34-page ruling rejecting a formal application from Bob Horning and his mother, Jane Horning, to hold outdoor concerts at the 158-acre Horning's Hideout near North Plains.

Earlier this year, land-use officers notified the Hornings that they would need to file for formal land-use approval to hold the concerts they've been putting on since 1999, when a bunch of Bob Horning's friends got together

and threw an impromptu event. Over the years the concerts have grown in size and popularity, due in part to the beauty of the setting. Horning's Hideout is set in a serene valley with wooded hills, wide open green spaces, lots of room to lounge on the grass and spots to pitch tents. This year's line-up included the Northwest Reggae Fest, the 7th Annual Pickathon and the Shakedown, which have all been relocated (see www.horningshideout.com).

While government officials say they're just following the rules, evidence supports a different motivation. It all started when neighbors Carolee and Jay Tyson circulated a letter urging people to sign a "petition of objection." The letter contains numerous allegations including the statement, "Not all, but the majority of the people that attend these events are dread-locked, tie-dyed hippies looking to 'expand their consciousness' for the weekend on a steady diet of drugs and alcohol."

Angela Owens, one of the co-founders of the Northwest Reggae Fest, which features mostly black performers, thinks the reason the county is cracking down on Horning is more about the people who attend the concerts than noise, traffic and the other concerns raised by both the neighbors and the code enforcement officers. "Maybe it really just comes down to racism," Owens said. "Maybe that lady looked at Bob (Horning's) website and saw the dreadlocks and the banners and just freaked out."

The Hornings are hoping they'll be able to hold one more event at the venue this summer, the String Cheese Incident's Annual Festival, by applying for a permit under the Oregon Mass Gathering Act, a state law governing events with attendance of 3,000 or more people.

Bob Horning has also filed a Measure 37 claim, which would supercede the county's ruling. But two of the Washington County commissioners are on record stating they would not vote to hear the Hornings' claim ahead of schedule, even though the waiver

THIS MODERN WORLD

by TOM TOMORROW



request will likely be approved in the fall. So far, Washington County has approved all Measure 37 waivers that have come before them rather than settle with landowners for economic damages.

In the meantime Bob Horning is bracing for the worst. "I think they're trying to shut me down," he said. "You will always get a few people at a concert doing drugs. But this neighbor seems to be on a crusade. When I first read the letter that was circulated, I wanted to sue her for defamation. But while this is ongoing, I have no recourse."

Buried in legal fees, Horning has put out a plea to supporters to help by donating through a secure PayPal online link on their website. "That was really hard for me to do," he said. "But it's (money) going to be another deciding factor as to whether we're going to open next year." — *Melissa Bears*

HEMPFEST HAPPENS

The Emerald Empire HempFest overcame numerous obstacles to pull off an event July 15-16 at Washington-Jefferson Park that organizers describe as a "physical success" but a "financial disaster." Preliminary accounting shows an operating budget of \$6,000 for the educational hemp "trade show" and celebration, but revenues of only about \$1,500, says Dan Koozer of the Hempfest.

"We will be continuing to try raising funds," says Koozer. "I need to bang on doors myself, but with the permit process, trying to find insurance and everything else I haven't had time."

Koozer says the group applied for a city permit for the event two months early, but could have used more time. "And for the first time we had difficulties getting insurance," trying several companies before getting a timely response and an acceptable bid of \$750.

"The event itself was excellent," says

Koozer. "There were no 'incidents,' everyone was happy; vendors, park personnel and the EPD. We had to agree to a 'zero tolerance' policy towards drugs and marijuana, including medicinal marijuana."

Koozer says the crowd was small Saturday and even smaller Sunday. He blames the low attendance on the group's inability to advertise before they had the permit and "uncertainty as to whether we could pull it off."

"The event was a success in that we showed that we can conduct an event that isn't a 'danger to the community,'" he says. "The police stayed completely out of the way," other than to keep the nearby bike lanes cleared of parked cars.

The first music act Saturday was "death rock" that sent some people running, and even vendors threatened to leave. "Nasty stuff," says Koozer. "Not the kind of music for a peace, love and nature type of event." But the rest of the entertainment went well, and a sizeable number of neighborhood volunteers showed up and "worked their butts off." — *Ted Taylor*

JOHN HENRY'S CONSOLIDATES

As of July 1, local music club John Henry's has one less owner. Brothers and owners Keith and Mark Martin bought out their partner, James Carroll, for exclusive ownership rights of the venue. Carroll and the Martin brothers had been partners since the new location on West Broadway opened in May of 2002.

Keith Martin says that John Henry's, known for its bar and local music scene, will continue to operate as before, with no major changes in the works. "Its business as usual," Martin says. "There will be some small changes, we would like to see more early shows as well as more benefit shows, and we're going to keep diversifying."

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